



Policy Name: Social Media Policy

DEPARTMENT: Administration

New Amendment

SP Governance/Corporate Policy and Planning/Policies and Procedures

POLICY NO: POL-0172-Admin

New Policy

City of Langford Social Media Policy

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1.0 Purpose

This Social Media Policy provides rules and guidelines for the use of social media by the public, employees and members of Council related to the City of Langford's official social media accounts and content related to the City of Langford. Social media includes any online platform or application that enables users to create, share, or exchange information and content on social media platforms including but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Let's Chat Langford (Granicus software).

This Policy is intended to support City staff and Council in the effective and responsible use of social media for their work and to ensure the City of Langford's official social media accounts provide accurate, transparent, and publicly accessible information on City policies, programs and services.

As the City of Langford can only recommend that employees and members of Council use best practices for communication on their personal social media accounts, Sections 3.2 and 4.0 should be considered guidelines rather than requirements.

For questions or concerns regarding the City of Langford's social media activity and/or this Social Media Policy, please contact social@langford.ca.

2.0 Public Social Media Use

2.1 Terms of Use

The City of Langford social media accounts serve to inform residents and visitors about City programs and services, career opportunities and to promote events in Langford. These social media channels are intended to encourage positive dialogue and provide citizens with a way to access information about their community.

To enforce respectful, safe and constructive discussion on all City social media platforms, the City reserves the right to delete comments, messages and posts that include:

- Violent, obscene, profane, hate-based, or racist posts, links or images.
- Comments that threaten or defame any person, group or organization.
- Personal, sensitive, or confidential information about any person (ex. addresses, phone numbers, email addresses or other information).
- Solicitations, commercial endorsements or advertisements.
- Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity, including material that violates copyright or trademark law.
- Promotion of political candidates.
- Comments that violate the Terms of Service of the social media platform.

Violating these Terms of Use may also result in the removal of access to the site. The City of Langford is not responsible for the conduct of other social media users, nor material posted by users who interact with the City on social media.

2.2 Personal Information and Privacy

By engaging with the City of Langford's social media platform, you acknowledge and agree that you are providing your informed consent to the disclosure of any personal information you provide, including your image, on a public social media platform (in accordance with the BC *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* [FOIPPA]). Any information collected via social media, including your image, may be stored and/or accessed outside of Canada on servers not belonging to the City. To protect your own privacy and the privacy of others, please do not share any personal information, including phone numbers and email addresses.

The personal information you post may be collected by the City of Langford under s. 26 (c) of FOIPPA for the purposes of engaging with the public, including promoting the City. For more information about the collection, use or disclosure of personal information via social media, contact the City at social@langford.ca or 250-478-7882.

3.0 Employee Social Media Use

The City of Langford recognizes the value of social media as a tool for conducting business and encourages its appropriate use by City staff. Social media can facilitate information sharing, timely communication and collaborative dialogue with residents, and offer accessible opportunities to engage community members.

3.1 Corporate Use

When using social media for City purposes, employees must adhere to the same standards of conduct as they would in any other work situation, such as a meeting, conference, or public event. These rules and guidelines dictate the appropriate use of the City of Langford's official social media accounts, including:

- Instagram: [@cityoflangford](https://www.instagram.com/cityoflangford)
- [LinkedIn: City of Langford](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cityoflangford)

Official City of Langford social media accounts may only be posted on and managed by designated social media spokespersons who have received training in appropriate use of public communications channels. Employees wishing to provide content for the official social media channels should email social@langford.ca. The City's social media accounts are monitored during business hours (8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Sunday).

Departments must obtain approval from the Chief Administrative Officer before launching new social media accounts or platforms.

Voice & Tone

Designated employees who are posting to and moderating the City's official social media accounts should strive to provide accurate, transparent, and accessible information. This includes:

- Being polite, respectful, and positive.
- Checking for spelling and grammatical errors.
- Protecting their personal information and the personal information of any other staff or residents.
- Confirming the accuracy of responses to questions with the appropriate program or services staff.
- Responding to appropriate comments and questions promptly.
- Ensuring permissions: graphics must not contain copyrighted photos or photos without the express consent of the photographer and the person or guardian of a minor depicted.

Accessibility Considerations

As a prescribed organization under the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, the City of Langford's social media accounts must abide by the following guidelines to ensure information posted is accessible to all residents and visitors:

- **AltText:** Alt Text, also called alternative text or image descriptions, should be added to all photos and graphics posted on social media accounts.
- **Plain Language:** Social media posts should be written in short, direct sentences with easy-to understand words.
- **Captioning:** All videos should include captions or subtitles that describe the audio in the video.
- **Design:** Graphics should include high contrast between text and graphic elements, and use simple fonts with clear separation between letters.

Election Periods

During the pre-campaign period and campaign period of a municipal election, the City of Langford official social media accounts will remain neutral, sharing only procedural information.

The City of Langford official social media accounts will not post content that could constitute or be perceived as constituting election advertising in favour of any candidate.

3.2 Personal Use

Employees should be aware of their position as civil servants and representatives of the City of Langford in public spaces, including on social media. The City of Langford expects employees to conduct themselves in a way that maintains and enhances the public's trust and confidence.

Employees must conduct themselves in a way that separates their personal and professional use of social media and must avoid all conflicts of interest, real or perceived. To help distinguish personal and professional opinions, employees are recommended to include a statement in their bio that makes it clear that the views expressed on their personal social media accounts do not reflect the official views of the City of Langford.

Employees should consider the following in their personal social media use:

- City authorization is required before posting City-owned logos, photographs, graphics or other media.
- Do not place yourself in a conflict of interest by revealing confidential or privileged City information.
- Do not comment on or identify other City employees without their consent.
- All employees must abide by the Respectful Workplace Policy, Confidential Information Policy, Employee Bylaw and other applicable City policies that govern behavior.

The City recognizes that employees are proud of the work they do and encourages them to share posts from the City of Langford's official social media accounts to celebrate organizational achievements and raise community awareness of programs and services.

4.0 Use of Social Media by Members of Council

As elected officials, Council members retain the right to manage and maintain their personal social media accounts and post as private citizens. However, as representatives of the City of Langford Council, members are encouraged to post on social media in a way that reflects positively on Council and the City as a whole.

Guidelines for personal social media use include:

- Serving constituents by providing accurate and timely information about Council decisions and City services and programs.
- Behaving in accordance with the [Council Code of Conduct Policy](#), Confidential Information Policy, and the Respectful Workplace Policy.
- Refraining from posting content on social media during confidential meetings, including Council or committee meetings considering in camera items.
- Not responding to service requests directly – instead referring individuals to the proper City channels.
- Developing a personal policy regarding the removal of threatening, discriminatory, hate-based or harassing comments or messages, and blocking individuals that make these comments.
- Not using City resources or materials for personal, re-election or campaign purposes.

Council members are advised to avoid engaging in emotion-driven conversations on social media and in other online spaces. If citizens have concerns or questions, Council is advised to address them directly by arranging a meeting or phone call, or directing citizens to the appropriate City department which is often more effective.

Adopted by Council
Meeting Date: June 19, 2023

CERTIFIED CORRECT



Administrator

Braden Hutchins
Corporate Officer

Date: *June 19, 2023*